SYNOPSIS OF THE PROPOSED THESIS "PROTESTANT ORIENTALISM AND ITS THEORETICAL PRACTICES IN INDIA"

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1. Introduction

Orientalism is a field of learned study, of the Oriental lands geographically, culturally, ethnically, linguistically and so on; it expresses the strength of the West and weakness of the East through the eyes of the modern scientific rationality which studies the real world as external to the observer-scholar, which does not yield to the dynamics of the subject but it objectifies the subject of study as something unchanging; it represents a 'complex series of knowledgeable manipulations' by which the Orient was identified by the West as something exotic, irrational, mysterious, spiritual and so on; it helped in the rationalization of the colonial rule of the Oriental lands. This process of systematization of the knowledge about the Orient helped in the familiarization of the non-familiar aspects of the Orient and the native knowledge was sieved through the knowledge grid of the Occident. This sort of familiarization of the non-familiar helped to regulate, discipline and control the East when the colonialism was established during the 'high modern' period.

According to tradition, Christianity arrived in India when St. Thomas, one of the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ, reached the Malabar Coast in AD.52. During his travel to southern India around the end of the 13th century, Marco Polo mentioned the burial site of St. Thomas as an important place of pilgrimage. The Portuguese first and Dutch later introduced their branches of Christianity in the region they ruled in Asia during the 16th and 17th century, but it is with the subsequent British domination in the 18th century that a new wave of missionary activity begins.

In the present study, an attempt is made to understand how the Euro-American Protestant missionaries developed their socio-cultural notions about the Indians, depending upon the affiliation of nationality, missions and individual interests. This will help to understand the veracity of the claims of Saidian Orientalism and the ways to enhance its theoretical tools according to Indian context.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Study

1. The present thesis titled "**Protestant Orientalism and its Theoretical Practices in India**" is an attempt to study Protestant Orientalism in India. How Protestant Orientalism emerged through the Protestant missions in India.
2. The study is also to understand what Protestant Orientalism is and how it perceived the natives of India.
3. How the Protestant missionaries were influenced by pre-modern and modern Orientalism and adopted a different stand according to the needs of the mission?
4. How did their nationalities, individual interests and mission statements shape their Orientalist views?
5. It attempts to understand how Protestant missionaries interpreted the Bible, and used the pedagogical structures and medical facilities as the means of religious conversion.
6. How did the pre-modern Orientalism differ and overlap with the modern varieties?

3. Conceptual Framework

Orientalism – Orientalism is a field of learned study, of the Oriental lands geographically, culturally, ethnically and linguistically. Through these studies they create a discourse about the Orient and justified the legitimization of the colonial ruled over the Orient.

Discourses – How the system of thought and social organization are formed and put into place. It developed out of verbal or written interaction and then defines how we would perceive the world.

Orient – The notions about the Orient that was invented by the Western Orientalist to define the East.

Occident – Occident is the opposite term of Orient and it is refers to lands and culture within Europe.

Hegemony – How one group dominates another group without using the power or coercion. Because, the dominant group consciously put forwarded a view and said that it included the interest of all groups. Then the dominant view is normalized through consent of the all people.

Post-Colonial – It refers to the period after the colonialism.

Postcolonialism – It is a theoretical tool and intervention that help to study the colonial discourses about the Orient.

Decolonisation – It is a process to emerge out from the inheritance of discriminative forms of the colonial practices.

When the Western Orientalist (poet, novelist, philosopher, political theorist, economist, imperial administrator) represented or described the Orient, they accepted the binary of Occident and Orient, as the starting point in their writing. And through their writings they produced a discourse or a system of thought about the Orient. Then, they created a 'cultural hegemony' over the Orient through the Orientalist discourses.

4. The Research Issues

- What was the notion of Orient in the Orientalist, particularly the Protestant missions, understanding of the natives of India?
- What was the response of Protestant missionaries to the issue of marginalization, in their contribution?
- Whether the Protestant missionaries were/are influenced by the early Christian responses to the marginalized people or whether their responses to the question of marginalization are an offshoot of modernity and colonial aspirations?
- What types of works and services the missionaries offered to the natives in the third world?

- What were the political background and the colonial conditions which helped the purpose of the Christian missionaries to 'uplift the marginalized'?

5. Review of Literature

In his book, *Orientalism*, Edward W. Said has challenged the concept of Orientalism or the difference between East and West. Orientalism is a set of representation of the Orient by the Orientalist. They claimed that they represented the orient in a neutral, objective and scientific way. In this way, the Orient became a discursive reality and denied any other dimension of the reality. The various types of discourse about the Orient have gained through repetitive and stereotypical knowledge, and they were produced with the help of various disciplines of knowledge. Later this knowledge about the Orient became an absolute source to look or understand the Orient. Said gave a new perspective that how Orientalism served as a theoretical basis for the legitimisation of colonialism. The limitation of this book is that there is an in-depth analysis about the discourses on the Middle-East, but not much about the Indian context.

In his another book, *Cultural imperialism*, Said described a more general pattern of relationship between the modern metropolitan West and its overseas territories. He studied modern Western empires of the 19th and 20th century. He also examined the European writing on Africa, India, parts of Far East, Australia and the Caribbean. For that, he has chosen the novels on and about Orient. And described that how these novels are important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references and experiences about Orient.

A book which has relevance to the topic of the theses, *Catholic Orientalism- Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th- 18th centuries)*, written by Angela Barreeto Xavier and Ines G. Zupanova, discusses about the production of knowledge about the Indian context by the Portuguese catholic missionaries during the period of sixteen century to eighteen century. They had tried to explain the role of catholic missionaries in orientalizing the east by west. During the Portuguese imperial period various travellers came to India, tried to transmute the Indian society in their writings in order to provide detailed knowledge of India to Portuguese kings that they can utilize knowledge gained from writings in order to expand their empire. Where,

Portuguese rulers provided this information to religious missionaries, which helped them to have social and religious understanding of Indian people that they utilized to making native people inferior in respect to the Christianity. These missionaries came from Portugal were Catholic in nature, to which a vast conversion of native people took place. This conversion to Catholicism helped in vast manner to the expansion of Portuguese Empire. The book is limited to the aspects of Portuguese Catholic Orientalism and not the protestant Orientalism.

Sharada Sugirtharajha, in her book, *Imagining Hinduism: A Postcolonial Perspective*, examines how 'Hinduism' has been defined and interpreted by Western Orientalist, such as William Jones, Max Muller, William Ward, John Nichol Farquhar, Julia Leslie. These Orientalist understood the 'Hinduism' through, their own 'theological and ideological suppositions'. However the book was limited to these five Orientalists.

Herbert J. Kane, in his book, *A concise History of the Christian World Mission – A Panoramic View of Missions from Pentecost to the Present,* he gave a historical understanding of the Christian world mission from 1st century to 20th century. He explained that how mission was established and what are the basic features of the missions. He also explained that what kinds of missions are formed in Europe and America for evangelical purpose to the third world countries. This book gives an overview of the Christian world mission but not in detail.

Richard King, in his book, *Orientalism and Religion – Postcolonial Theory, India and 'The Mystic East'*, examines the way in which notions such as mysticism, religion, Hinduism and Buddhism are taken for granted by the Orientalist. He shows us how religion needs to be reinterpreted along the lines of cultural studies, drawing on a variety of post-structuralist and post-colonial thinkers, such as Foucault, Said, Spivak.

E. Daniel Potts, in his book, *British Baptist Missionaries in India, 1793-1837: The History of Serampore and its Missions*, gives us an account of Serampore mission in colonial India. He also discussed their efforts for social reform and of their literary and educational work.

Michael Curtis, in his book, *Orientalism and Islam: European Thinkers on Oriental Despotism in the Middle East and India,* explained the Oriental despotism by a selection of Western thinkers from eighteenth to early twentieth century.

David Kopf, in his book, *British Orientaism and Bengal renaissance: The dynamics of Indian Modernization 1773-1835,* analyzed the nature of the European contribution to the nineteenth century Bengal Renaissance.

K. M. Panikkar, in his book, *Asia and Western dominance: A Survey of the Vasco Da Gama Epoch of Asian History, 1498-1945,* analyzed the power relation between East and West and gave a broad description about European activities in Asia over 450 years. The intervening of 450 years Panikkar called 'the da Gama epoch'.

6. Scope of the Study

- Understanding the social, political and cultural circumstances during the British colonial period in India that served as the background for the theatrical imagination of the Protestant missionaries about the native people of India.
- How the Protestant missionaries approached the question of marginalization in the India during the modern period?
- Understanding the problem of colonial impacts on the natives, anti-colonial reactions of the natives towards the religious colonialism in the postcolonial context. Further, this may help us to understand the nuances of the workings of native Orientalism against the marginalized people.
- It will also try to find out the role played by Protestant missionaries (European, American and native) and the reactions of the native elites to Protestant missions towards the composition of the present society.

7. Methodology

The overall methodology is based on socio-historical analysis. It analyses the common historical background of the Christian missionaries and their missions in India. As the study will also be based on culture studies, the critical, analytical and descriptive methods are of vital use.

The study is an attempt on the historical, political, cultural and social thoughts and backgrounds of the Protestant missionaries in India. Within the historical analysis, it will study the process, development and nature of the missions of the Protestant missionaries in India.

8. Sources of the Research

The present research work will be dependent on both primary and secondary sources. For the present research work the primary sources will be the missionary reports, government reports on missionaries available in the archives. As well as study will also depend on the other secondary sources, like books and journals on oriental missions, missionary movements, missionary works on the depressed classes and the marginalized people

9. Tentative Chapterisation

a) Introduction
b) Orientalism and Aftermath
c) The Advent of Protestant Missionaries
d) Protestant Orientalism and Its Views of the Native
e) Protestant Mission and Religious Conversion
f) Conclusion

a) Introduction

The introductory chapter discusses aims and objectives of the study, conceptual framework, research issue, review of literature, scope of the study, methodology and sources of the research.

b) Orientalism and Aftermath

Orientalism is a style of thought based on the ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and the Occident. Since the publication of E. W. Said's Orientalism in 1978, the concept of Orientalism changed its meaning and intention. In his book, Said questioned the pattern of misrepresentation of the Oriental people, lands, religion, customs etc. by the Orientalist. Fundamental to Orientalism is the binary between East and

West. The West had that power to construct and impose a binary that relegated all non-European cultures as East, and as the Other.

The Oriental representations about the Orient were determined by the nationality of the Orientalist, the nature of the mission to which the Orientalist belonged to, the changing political landscape and the change in the conceptual apparatus. Accordingly, there are varieties of Orientalism, depending upon the political, economic and socio-cultural concerns of the nation to which the Orientalist belonged to and the Orientalist representations were also classified as early modern, high modern, Catholic, Protestant, etc, too.

Post-colonial thinkers today tend to attempt a kind of epistemic de-colonization or a structural critique of the post-colonial predicament in order to develop strategies that resist the remnants of colonization. Decolonization does not just end at independence. Decolonization is an ongoing process.

C) The Advent of Protestant Missionaries

After the religious reformation in the Europe, Protestant churches took the Gospel to the ends of the earth during the period of world exploration and colonization, which begun about 1500. The first Protestant mission to India came from King Frederick IV of Denmark who was an ardent follower of the Lutheran teachings. A mission was founded in the Danish settlement of Tranquebar in South India. The first Protestant missionaries were two German missionaries Ziegenbalg and Plutschau sent by the king. They landed on July 9th 1706 in Tranquebar. In 1947, there were over 150 missionary societies at work in India. In this chapter, the history of protestant missions in India will be discussed.

d) Protestant Orientalism and Its Views of the Native

Edward Said made a theoretical contribution about the varieties of Orientalism. Many scholars try to fill that gap like Angela Barreeto Xavier and Ines G. Zupanova in *Catholic Orientalism- Portuguese Empire, Indian Knowledge (16th- 18th centuries)* but the book is limited to the aspects of Portuguese Catholic Orientalism and not the protestant Orientalism.

Most of the missionaries and some historians of 18th and 19th century missions believed that British rule in India was an opportunity provided by God to lift India from ignorance about God and superstitions. In European mission histories, the colonized were termed as 'barbarous', 'savages', 'pagan' and 'superstitious'. Hence the mission goal was not only Christianizing heathens, but also civilizing them under superior European culture and evangelical spirituality. Further the missionary work in 18th-19th century India was grounded in the binary distinctions of European and India, white and brown, civilized and primitive, Christian and pagan. These binary divisions gave the colonizers grounds for justifying the European project of colonization of India and proselytizing of the Indians. Although the missionaries worked hard and suffered a lot for bringing education and awareness of social justice to the people living in the rural areas of India, still their views on the native Indians were influenced by the Orientalist attitudes.

e) Protestant Mission and Religious Conversion

When the first Catholic missionaries arrived in India with the Portuguese trading ship in the late 15th century, they mainly focused on coast land people. Later when Protestant missionaries arrived in India in the 18th century, they focused on marginalized people of the inland territories of Indian society.

Before examining the various methods used by the missionaries to convert the natives into Christianity, we have to understand their attitude and perception towards the natives. They wanted to 'disseminate…. the humane and saving principles of the Christian religion' to 'uncivilized barbarian'. It determined the attitude of the missionaries towards the natives. Charles Grant's '*Observation*' helped to construct the attitude of the missionaries towards the natives in England. 'Grant's long stay in Bengal made his '*Observation*' an authority, from which the missionaries drew arguments freely, in many of their subsequent writings. In his book, he described the degradation of the Hindus and Muslims. So the missionaries understood religion as the one of the reasons for the degradation of the native people. So they advocated conversion to Christianity as the remedy.

f) Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis of details discussed in the earlier chapters, the conclusions and inferences will be drawn.

10. Limitations

- As the study deals with Orientalism, only Protestant Orientalism is given importance. The other forms of Orientalism, such as Catholic Orientalism and the pre-modern Orientalism were not given its due stress, though such materials are quoted where necessary.
- The research, owing to the paucity of time, could concentrate on limited sources, though it intends to cover all the materials available on Orienalism. So we need further studies to know further the implications of Orientalism in the post-colonial reality.

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